

## Example 1

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English Class

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### Should Smoking Be Banned in Public Restaurants?

In the perfect situation, smoking policy would be set by bar or restaurant owners, and customers would patronize the establishments with the policy they prefer. Customers would decide—without the government's help—if they want to avoid smoke-filled rooms or enter them. They might even choose to sit in an area sectioned off for smokers or non-smokers, but the ultimate issue is choice (Ruwart 1). When the government starts telling restaurant owners what their customers can and cannot do, the government is overstepping its boundaries.

Our government aims to protect us—to save us from society's evils. However, in an attempt to protect the public from the effects of passive smoking (second hand smoke)—of which, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service in 1994, "the statistical evidence does not . . . support a conclusion that there are substantive health effects . . ." (Krauthammer)—the feds have failed to protect a vital part of the U.S. economic population: business owners. Many people who drink also tend to smoke; banning drinkers from smoking has hurt business in some bars and restaurants. "According to the California Licensed Beverage Association, business has dropped as much as 85 percent . . . since the prohibition took effect" ("Bar Owners Vow" 1). The decrease in customers and subsequent loss of revenue has far-reaching effects

on employers. A study by the American Beverage Institute entitled "Effect of 1998 California Smoking Ban on Bars, Taverns, and Night Clubs" asked 300 respondents about the effects of the ban on their businesses. When asked if the ban caused owners to lay off employees or cut working hours, 29.7 percent of respondents answered "yes"; 59 percent gave the same answer when asked if they experienced a loss of tips/gratuities for bar and serving-staff employees (1). The plight of restaurant and bar owners is often ignored, but it is a serious issue for them and for their employees.

While the argument rages over the effects of smoking on public health, the question that remains is this: "How much is society entitled to penalize smokers for their decisions because—in society's view—those decisions are unhealthy?" (Samuelson). Smoking tobacco is not an illegal act, yet the 25 percent of Americans who do smoke are often treated as if they were criminals. They are incessantly nagged, blamed for numerous illnesses and unpleasanties, and made to feel guilty by self-righteous nonsmokers (Bork 28). The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that living with a smoker increases your chance of lung cancer by 19 percent. What they fail to tell you is that, in contrast, (firsthand) smoking increases your chance 1,000 percent (Buckley). Why is the act of smoking tobacco, which merely injures oneself, so scrutinized and shunned by society, while drinking alcohol, which is by far more deadly to innocent bystanders, is accepted by society and virtually unregulated? (Krauthammer). One may not wish to be seated near an extremely obese person in a restaurant, but it would certainly be unconstitutional to deny service to these patrons. In modern society, the government knows better than to discriminate against minorities, senior citizens, or the physically handicapped; it does not hesitate, however, to discriminate against smokers.

Personal choice is a simple principle that is highly valued in American society. Banning smoking in all public restaurants violates this principle and jeopardizes our freedom. Smoking should not be banned in all restaurants. A ban on smoking imposes unnecessary governmental interference in private business, affects business owners negatively, and discriminates against smokers. Like the black Southerner turned away because of racial segregation, the smoker is unfairly treated. Sadly, just when our government claims to be whisking away the clouds of smoke, it is legislating a cloud of discrimination.

-she used <sup>1a</sup> high vocabulary

-There's a true point being made

-work cited facts, 1<sup>st</sup> opinion

- citations

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# MLA Research Paper (Daly)

Daly 1

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Professor Chavez  
English 101  
14 March XXXX

## A Call to Action:

### Regulate Use of Cell Phones on the Road

When a cell phone goes off in a classroom or at a concert, we are irritated, but at least our lives are not endangered. When we are on the road, however, irresponsible cell phone users are more than irritating: They are putting our lives at risk. Many of us have witnessed drivers so distracted by dialing and chatting that they resemble drunk drivers, weaving between lanes, for example, or nearly running down pedestrians in crosswalks. A number of bills to regulate use of cell phones on the road have been introduced in state legislatures, and the time has come to push for their passage. Regulation is needed because drivers using phones are seriously impaired and because laws on negligent and reckless driving are not sufficient to punish offenders.

No one can deny that cell phones have caused traffic deaths and injuries. Cell phones were implicated in three fatal accidents in November 1999 alone. Early in November, two-year-old Morgan Pena was killed by a driver distracted by his cell phone. Morgan's mother, Patti Pena, reports that the driver "ran a stop sign at 45 mph, broadsided my vehicle and killed Morgan as she sat in her car seat." A week later, corrections officer Shannon Smith, who was guarding prisoners by the side of the road, was killed by a woman distracted by a phone call (Besthoff). On Thanksgiving weekend

Title is centered.

Opening sentences catch readers' attention.

Thesis asserts Angela Daly's main point.

Daly uses a clear topic sentence.

Signal phrase names the author of the quotation to follow.

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Author's name is given in parentheses; no page number is available.

Marginal annotations indicate MLA-style formatting and effective writing.

Source: Diana Hacker (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006).

This paper has been updated to follow the style guidelines in the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th ed. (2009).

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Clear topic  
sentences, like  
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Summary and  
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that same month, John and Carole Hall were killed when a Naval Academy midshipman crashed into their parked car. The driver said in court that when he looked up from the cell phone he was dialing, he was three feet from the car and had no time to stop (Stockwell B8).

Expert testimony, public opinion, and even cartoons suggest that driving while phoning is dangerous. Frances Bents, an expert on the relation between cell phones and accidents, estimates that between 450 and 1,000 crashes a year have some connection to cell phone use (Layton C9). In a survey published by Farmers Insurance Group, 87% of those polled said that cell phones affect a driver's ability, and 40% reported having close calls with drivers distracted by phones. Many cartoons have depicted the very real dangers of driving while distracted (see fig. 1).

Scientific research confirms the dangers of using phones while on the road. In 1997 an important study appeared in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. The authors, Donald Redelmeier and Robert Tibshirani, studied 699 volunteers who made their cell phone bills available in order to confirm the times when they had placed calls. The participants agreed to report any nonfatal collision in which they were involved. By comparing the time of a collision with the phone records, the researchers assessed the dangers of driving while phoning. The results are unsettling:

We found that using a cellular telephone was associated with a risk of having a motor vehicle collision that was about about four times as high as

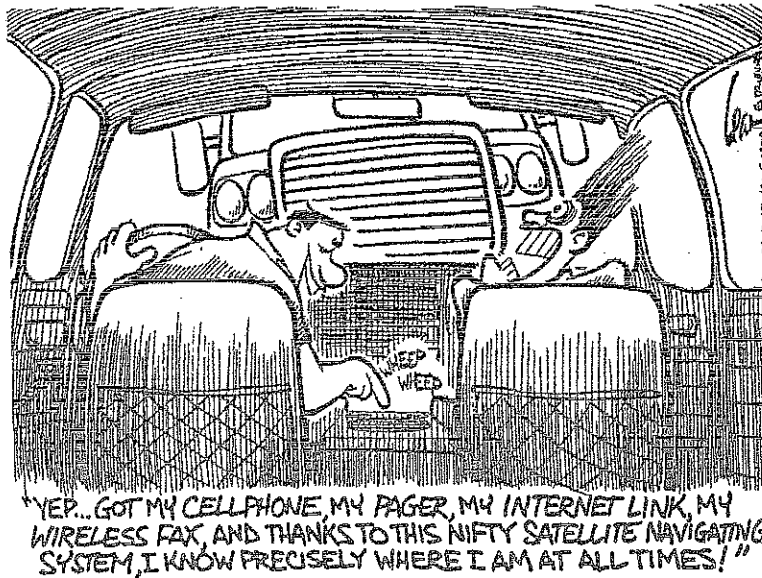


Fig. 1. A cartoon shows the dangers of using cell phones and other devices while driving (Lowe A21).

Illustration has figure number, caption, and source information.

that among the same drivers when they were not using their cellular telephones. This relative risk is similar to the hazard associated with driving with a blood alcohol level at the legal limit. (456)

The news media often exaggerated the latter claim ("similar to" is not "equal to"); nonetheless, the comparison with drunk driving suggests the extent to which cell phone use while driving can impair judgment.

A 1998 study focused on Oklahoma, one of the few states to keep records on fatal accidents involving cell phones. Using police records, John M. Violanti of the Rochester Institute of Technology investigated the relation between traffic fatalities in Oklahoma and

Summary begins with a signal phrase naming the author and ends with page numbers in parentheses.

the use or presence of a cell phone. He found a ninefold increase in the risk of fatality if a phone was being used and a doubled risk simply when a phone was present in a vehicle (522-23). The latter statistic is interesting, for it suggests that those who carry phones in their cars may tend to be more negligent (or prone to distractions of all kinds) than those who do not.

Daly counters an opposing argument.

Some groups have argued that state traffic laws make legislation regulating cell phone use unnecessary. Sadly, this is not true. Laws on traffic safety vary from state to state, and drivers distracted by cell phones can get off with light punishment even when they cause fatal accidents. For example, although the midshipman mentioned earlier was charged with vehicular manslaughter for the deaths of John and Carole Hall, the judge was unable to issue a verdict of guilty. Under Maryland law, he could only find the defendant guilty of negligent driving and impose a \$500 fine (Layton C1). Such a light sentence is not unusual. The driver who killed Morgan Pena in Pennsylvania received two tickets and a \$50 fine—and retained his driving privileges (Pena). In Georgia, a young woman distracted by her phone ran down and killed a two-year-old; her sentence was ninety days in boot camp and five hundred hours of community service (Ippolito J1). The families of the victims are understandably distressed by laws that lead to such light sentences.

Facts are documented with in-text citations: authors' names and page numbers (if available) in parentheses.

Daly uses an analogy to justify passing a special law.

When certain kinds of driver behavior are shown to be especially dangerous, we wisely draft special laws making them illegal and imposing specific punishments. Running red lights, failing to stop for a school bus, and drunk driving are obvious examples;



phoning in a moving vehicle should be no exception. Unlike more general laws covering negligent driving, specific laws leave little ambiguity for law officers and for judges and juries imposing punishments. Such laws have another important benefit: They leave no ambiguity for drivers. Currently, drivers can tease themselves into thinking they are using their car phones responsibly because the definition of "negligent driving" is vague.

As of December 2000, twenty countries were restricting use of cell phones in moving vehicles (Sundeen 8). In the United States, it is highly unlikely that legislation could be passed on the national level, since traffic safety is considered a state and local issue. To date, only a few counties and towns have passed traffic laws restricting cell phone use. For example, in Suffolk County, New York, it is illegal for drivers to use a handheld phone for anything but an emergency call while on the road (Haughney A8). The first town to restrict use of handheld phones was Brooklyn, Ohio (Layton C9). Brooklyn, the first community in the country to pass a seat belt law, has once again shown its concern for traffic safety.

Laws passed by counties and towns have had some effect, but it makes more sense to legislate at the state level. Local laws are not likely to have the impact of state laws, and keeping track of a wide variety of local ordinances is confusing for drivers. Even a spokesperson for Verizon Wireless has said that statewide bans are preferable to a "crazy patchwork quilt of ordinances" (qtd. in Haughney A8). Unfortunately, although a number of bills have been introduced in state legislatures, as of early 2001 no state law

Daly explains why US laws need to be passed on the state level.

Transition helps readers move from one paragraph to the next.

Daly cites an indirect source: words quoted in another source.

seriously restricting use of the phones had passed—largely because of effective lobbying from the wireless industry.

Daly counters a claim made by some opponents.

Despite the claims of some lobbyists, tough laws regulating phone use can make our roads safer. In Japan, for example, accidents linked to cell phones fell by 75% just a month after the country prohibited using a handheld phone while driving (Haughney A8). Research suggests and common sense tells us that it is not possible to drive an automobile at high speeds, dial numbers, and carry on conversations without significant risks. When such behavior is regulated, obviously our roads will be safer.

For variety Daly places a signal phrase after a brief quotation.

Because of mounting public awareness of the dangers of drivers distracted by phones, state legislators must begin to take the problem seriously. "It's definitely an issue that is gaining steam around the country," says Matt Sundeen of the National Conference of State Legislatures (qtd. in Layton C9). Lon Anderson of the American Automobile Association agrees: "There is momentum building," he says, to pass laws (qtd. in Layton C9). The time has come for states to adopt legislation restricting the use of cell phones in moving vehicles.

The paper ends with Daly's stand on the issue.

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Heading is centered.

List is alphabetized by authors' last names (or by title when a work has no author).

First line of each entry is at the left margin; extra lines are indented 1/2".

Double-spacing is used throughout.

Abbreviation "n.d." indicates that the online source has no update date.

## Example 3

Some dude

Mr. Ateacher

English Class

February 27, 2012

I am sure that you know that smoking harms your body. Then why do you continue smoking? Maybe you do it because you haven't really become conscious about all the effects that smoking has. There are a lot of reasons why you shouldn't smoke. Some of them are that smoking affects your health, that you spend a lot of money on cigarettes, and that when you smoke you are not respecting people around you.

The first reason why you shouldn't smoke is that smoking affects your health. If you smoke, your physical condition will be negatively affected, so it will be very difficult for you to succeed in sports. Also, smoking produces lethal diseases like cancer and reduces the length and quality of your life. Maybe you don't notice all the physical effects of smoking immediately, but you surely will be sorry one day.

The second reason why you shouldn't smoke is because of all the money that you spend on it. Maybe you start smoking only when someone offers you a cigarette, but there will be a day when you will feel the need of a cigarette. By this time, you will pay whatever to smoke, and each time you will smoke more, so you will spend more money. All the money you would spend on cigars could have be spent in something better, don't you think?

The last reason why you shouldn't smoke is out of respect for the people around you. When you smoke, you not only harm yourself, but you also harm all the people around you. So you mustn't be selfish; you should at least avoid smoking in front of people who don't smoke. Also, many people don't like the cigarette's smell, so they won't enjoy your company. Would you like that?

I have said just some reasons of why you shouldn't smoke, so I hope that now those of you who smoke are able to think a little and try to make a smart decision. In addition to all the reasons I've said, I would like you to think about how much you love yourself and then whether you want to continue harming yourself. Think also about all the people who love you, like your family who doesn't want to see you suffering or sick. If you decide to continue smoking, what a pity. But if you decide to stop smoking, congratulations! Remember that "If you can dream it, you can do it."

Ms. Evans borrowed from Why you should not smoke from ESLbee.com